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# A Race to Educate: A Look at the Aims of the Student Life Programming at Hampton University, From 1930-1940, and Its Intended Effects on the Black American Cultural Identity

Akela Louise Stanfield  
*Loyola University Chicago*

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

A RACE TO EDUCATE: A LOOK AT THE AIMS OF THE STUDENT LIFE  
PROGRAMMING AT HAMPTON UNIVERSITY, FROM 1930-1940, AND ITS  
INTENDED EFFECTS ON THE BLACK AMERICAN CULTURAL IDENTITY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY  
AKELA L STANFIELD  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
DECEMBER 2012

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Finally, I must thank two of the bravest Black women educating urban students today; Lydia K. Young and Dionne R. Dean. They were more than CEPS classmates; they were my personal cheering squad.

For my father, the man that made my education possible.

To Uncle Cookie for giving me *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America*  
at the age of 12.

We are training not isolated men but a living group of men, - nay, a group within a group. And the final product of our training must be neither a psychologist nor a brickmason, but a man. And to make men, we must have ideals, broad, pure, and inspiring ends of living, - not sordid money-getting, not apples of gold. The worker must work for the lory of his handiwork, not simply for pay; the thinker must think for truth, not for fame. And all this is gained only by human strife and longing; by ceaseless training and education; by founding Right on righteousness and Truth on the unhampered search for Truth...and weaving thus a system, not a distortion, and bringing a birth, not an abortion.

— W.E.B. DuBois

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## ABSTRACT

In 2010 President Barack Obama announced a 98 million dollar federal funding increase in the proposed 2011 national budget for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). <sup>1</sup> With such an amount of money earmarked for the HBCU, questions arise about the importance of the HBCU in a seemingly integrated 21<sup>st</sup> century American college and education system. One approach to answering the questions is to look at the aims and outcomes of HBCUs during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a time period when most were producing college graduates<sup>2</sup> and compare them to the current aims and outcomes of the HBCUs, to determine the rate of progression. A major direction for past HBCU research has centered on how policy and leadership style have addressed student needs and whether or not those needs are presently relevant for the HBCU population.

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<sup>1</sup> Ryan, April D. (2010). "Obama's Budget Proposal: Some Benefits For HBCU's and Haiti." Retrieved March 8, 2010 from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/april-d-ryan/obamas-budget-proposal-so\\_b\\_445532.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/april-d-ryan/obamas-budget-proposal-so_b_445532.html)

<sup>2</sup> Before 1900 few Historically Black Colleges and Universities conferred baccalaureate degrees. According to W.E.B. Dubois 20<sup>th</sup> century study of the College-bred Negro; by 1900 there were 34 Negro Colleges (HBCU's). W.E.B. Dubois identified Negro Colleges in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as schools that offered a course amounting to at least one year in addition to the course of a New England High School, and offering collegiate training designed for the Negro race. However he did consider Hampton Institute graduates frequently in his study. Hampton was a normal school that produced many of the Black communities' teachers, and was accredited a college by 1930.

However, what the research has failed to do is specifically look at the intentions and effects of student life as well as student life programming<sup>3</sup> for measurement of HBCU purpose and value. Through the archival research of Hampton University's<sup>4</sup> student-facing publications such as student handbooks and student newspapers this study aims to uncover the original aims and goals of the HBCU. The aims and goals are highlighted through pinpointing the institutionally advanced norms. An analysis of this material indicates that the institutionally advanced norms of the HBCU, according to student voice, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century aimed to combat the stigma of the "shiftless Negro" stereotype by emphasizing the dignity of labor, mandated Christianity, and assimilation while depreciating the value of political and social rights. The research also indicated that student response to these norms shifted from compliance to protest over time. Notably absent from the research are discussions of suffrage and HBCU curriculum. This study is a part of a rising body of research observing the need for minority institutions, specifically the HBCU. In using the generally unused source of student handbooks and HBCU student publications from 1930-1940; this project highlights the importance of student voice in assessing the aims and outcomes of the institutions.

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<sup>3</sup> The latter and former create student culture.

<sup>4</sup> Formerly Hampton Institute. See note 105.

## CHAPTER ONE

### PROGRESSION OF BLACK AMERICAN CULTURE

The definition of Culture is a debated and divergent topic in scholarship. Michael Cole's, Roy Goodwin D'Andrade<sup>1</sup> founded definition of culture in the Harvard published essay "What's Culture Got to do with it," states that culture is "the full range of socially inherited (extra genetic) accomplishments of past human activities that serve as crucial resources for the current life of a social group... embodied in language and social practices...It is the species-specific medium of human life. It is also, so to speak, history in the present."<sup>2</sup> After consideration of Cole's definition assumptions can be made; culture is a method that humanity uses to sustain itself, culture is a by-product of humanity's experiences, and that humanity produces culture which contains the necessary information to ensure the continued "progress" of humanity. However, on

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<sup>1</sup> Roy Goodwin D'Andrade is a cognitive anthropologist that has worked heavily in the subject matter of cultural models and human motives. His work intersects with African –American studies through his studies of African American family structure. His definition of culture relies heavily on the idea that it is learned. He described culture in his 1981 work, *The Cultural Part of Cognition* as a very large pool of information passed along from generation to generation, composed of learned "*programs*" for action and understanding.

<sup>2</sup> Cole, M. (2010). What's Culture Got to Do with It? Educational research as a necessarily interdisciplinary enterprise. *Educational Research*, 39, 461-470.

assumption in particular frames this research; culture is not spontaneous nor genetic but created and consequential. And for centuries the transmission of culture has taken place within Educational institutions. Collective experience is where culture is birthed but the schoolhouse, whether it is a grammar school or university, is where it is advanced. For Black American culture the process has been no different. Africans in America, whom in this research are referred to as Black Americans and Negroes, were officially emancipated from the American system of slavery in September of 1863. However in order for this emancipation to be complete America had to recognize humanity in whom it had for centuries deemed inhumane. If Cole's stated definition is true; humanity is proven through the medium of culture and culture is advanced through education and its institutions; education was absolutely essential for Black Americans removal from a state of total disenfranchisement. Consequently, creating a cultural identity that America could and would be willing to locate Black American humanity within became an aspiration of the HBCU education<sup>3</sup>. Because the cultural progression from slave to an indefinite location for nearly 4 million Negroes (roughly 13 percent of the American population)<sup>4</sup> was at stake, the education of Black

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<sup>3</sup> Given the historic focus of HBCUs on the education of Black students, Walter Allen (1992) identified six specific goals endemic to these institutions. One of the six goals of HBCUs includes the maintenance of the Black historical and cultural tradition (and cultural influences emanating from the Black community). Allen, W. R. (1992). The color of success: African American student outcomes at predominantly White and historically Black public colleges and universities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62, 26-44.

<sup>4</sup> Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (2010) pp 239-42.

Americans following their emancipation was greatly debated by White America during the decades leading up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Who exactly were Negroes if they were not slaves? On one hand the population that had once enslaved them was bitter and war torn, and had no aspiration to educate their lost spoil. On the other hand the population seen as the emancipators of these people had an ambition to educate the newly freed slaves. Yet, both of these groups served as the American majority, were White, and readily admitted there was a Negro problem.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, a Hegelian philosophy of education, hinged on the divergent former stated desires of the White majority, was framed for Negroes. It was a philosophy that supposed Negroes should be educated in their correct (not necessarily equal) position in American society, or in other words, dictated their culture and forced within its confines. From this school of thought many if not all Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) were formed.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of HBCU's were founded during the American Reconstruction in the years 1865-1877,<sup>7</sup> through private and/or public funding. The majority of

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<sup>5</sup> The Negro problem was a summative term used to describe what freed slaves were to the majority (Whites) in American culture. It was used often by politicians and social leaders, both Black and White as a sort of rhetorical problem with various solutions that America was seeking to solve. The top Black leaders took a stab at solving the problem in a text titled *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day* (New York, 1903). It was authored by W. E.B. Dubois, Booker T. Washington, Charles W. Chesnutt, Wilford H. Smith, H. T. Kealing, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and T. Thomas Fortune.

<sup>6</sup> Anderson, J. (1988). *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935*. North Carolina: Chapel Hill Books. p 278.

<sup>7</sup> Holmes, Dwight W. O. (1934). *The Evolution of the Negro College*. Maryland: McGrath Publishing Company. p 210.

these schools at founding did not confer Bachelor's degrees and offered curricula more in stride with a high school or vocational education than a college degree. Many of these schools were also normal schools; producing the race's teachers. However by 1900 34 of the 84 founded HBCU's did offer a genuine higher education<sup>8</sup>, and thereafter the number steadily increased.<sup>9</sup> What Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) used, during the first forty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the Black College experience was in incubation, to meet the aim of advancing a cultural identity for Black Americans is cause for extensive contemplation. However the consequential study should not just cover the curriculum and what was directly taught in the classroom, but what was indirectly required by students outside of it; as well as the student response to that hidden curriculum. The former defines Student Life and its cultural impact is immense.

### **The Importance of Hampton Institute**

To acquire the most comprehensive look at how cultural identity for Black Americans was advanced at the HBCU through student life and student activities the Hampton student must be studied. Hampton Institute<sup>10</sup> was one of the most

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<sup>8</sup> See W.E.B. DuBois (ed.), *The College-Bred Negro: Report of a Social Study Made Under the Direction of Atlanta University* (Atlanta, 1900).

<sup>9</sup> According to the Hampton University website, Hampton Normal and Agricultural school began seeking its accreditation for collegiate studies in the first 20 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. <http://www.hamptonu.edu/about/history.cfm>.

<sup>10</sup> Upon founding Hampton Institute was known as *Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute*. By 1930, the historical timeframe for this research, it was simply known as *Hampton institute*. Since

respected<sup>11</sup> colleges founded during the American Reconstruction. Hampton Institute educated Booker T. Washington, who at the turn of the century was seen as the epitome of what a freed slave could be in America outside of slavery<sup>12</sup>, came *Up from Slavery*,<sup>13</sup> to be educated. Hampton Institute was also the model for Washington's Tuskegee Institute as well as other HBCU's founded<sup>14</sup>. The Hampton model was celebrated, duplicated, and at times mandated.<sup>15</sup>

Through views of Hampton Institute's student life, derived from extensive archival research of institution advanced norms, student response to those norms, and a scholar's<sup>16</sup> firsthand account of the former interaction, this study intends to prove that the goal of the HBCU during the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was not to produce students equipped to advance an independent

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1984 it has added departments and graduate programs and is known as *Hampton University*. For more information see <http://www.hamptonu.edu/about/history.cfm>.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson, J. (1988). *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935*. North Carolina: Chapel Hill Books. p 278.

<sup>12</sup> Dubois, W.E.B. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folks*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co. pp 41-59.

<sup>13</sup> Washington, B. (1919). *Up from Slavery; an Autobiography*. New York: Doubleday, Page, and Company. p 319.

<sup>14</sup> In Anderson's text (see note 14) he deems the mold of education practiced by Hampton and Tuskegee the "Hampton-Tuskegee" idea. Donald Spivey in his text, *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* deems the mold "The Industrial Model." For the sake of this research the form will combine the two and be noted simply as the Hampton Model.

<sup>15</sup> Anderson, J. (1988). *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935*. North Carolina: Chapel Hill Books. p 278.

<sup>16</sup> Speaking of Langston Hughes 1934 visit to Hampton Institute.

Black American cultural identity. On the contrary, it was to produce students that would maintain a subservient Black American cultural identity embedded in what the American (White) cultural identity was and what its existence allowed. It will also prove that in light of campus affected events from 1930-1940; this once accepted goal- was rejected by students.

### The Use of Archival Research

The archival research is grounded with a thorough history and bridge analysis of the Hampton model and it's affect on Black College culture 60 years later. Research is also established with the analysis of primary and secondary resources that pinpoint what the aspirations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century HBCU should be according to W.E.B Dubois, a prominent 20<sup>th</sup> century Black scholar that directly tied Black cultural induction and stability to the progress of the HBCU. Also provided is a commentary by 20<sup>th</sup> century Black scholar and poet Langston Hughes' that serves as a firsthand account of institutionally advanced cultural norms at Hampton Institute. Finally, the background provides short analyses of two major events that shape the timeframe of this research; the Scottsboro trials<sup>17</sup>, and the student supported resignation of Hampton Institute's administrative head, President Art Howe<sup>18</sup>.

The archival research from 20th century Hampton University student life is immense. To get an accurate and measurable view of what cultural norms were

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<sup>17</sup> See the section of this research titled: The Scottsboro Trials.

<sup>18</sup> See the section of this research titled: Dr. Howe's Resignation.



being advanced at the institution, as well as student response; a smaller research timeline had to be chosen. For this study the years 1930-1940 were selected because of the two major events highlighted above and their impact upon the aims and outcomes of Hampton University's student programming. It was also chosen because 1930 marked the year of Hampton's transformation from a trade school and academy to a full college. The archival literature overwhelmingly includes literature from the Hampton students themselves. In their student newspapers, articles about the expectations of the Hampton student and activities that were encouraged are abundant. Within the student programming documents of Hampton University the observations of student behavior and activities is discussed at length, urging students to conduct themselves in a manner conducive for entrance into American (White) culture, and to busy themselves with activities that promote agricultural or religious development. This literature is the most helpful for this study because it is comprised directly of student and institutional voice making it a most reliable source for the student attitudes towards institutional aims for the Hampton student.

The research paid closest attention to the student handbook and student newspapers. These two archival bodies illustrated a clear relationship between what norms the institution advanced and how the student responded to those norms. The research lightly touches student club announcements, public student

reprimands, student events, and general student announcements.<sup>19</sup> Along with the handbook and student publications these documents gave a view of the aims of the student-life programming by shedding light on the types of activities that were promoted on campus, the behavioral expectations and discipline of students, as well as the social and political culture of the student body and campus.

After the foundation is laid through the background analyses the archival research is presented. It is presented first through the student handbook to get a general sense of what the advanced norms of the institution were; secondly through the student newspapers to gage the response to these specific norms, as well as, other student and local publications to gage the student mindset towards their place in America's Black cultural space and highlighting their resistance to Hampton administration (norms included) by the vocal call of their president's resignation and their initial but not final display of ambivalence towards the Scottsboro trial.

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<sup>19</sup> These were also located in the student newspaper, *The Hampton Script*.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL ADVANCEMENT: THE HBCU**

#### **The Hampton Model and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century HBCU**

The model of higher education offered to Blacks as a whole after the Civil War was one of industrialization and servitude, not of progress and ingenuity. The founding of Hampton Institute<sup>1</sup> is the establishment of that educational model. General Samuel Chapman Armstrong founded the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in 1868.<sup>2</sup> Hampton was created to educate Negro youth to become community teachers that lead by an example of self-reliance and moral character through the tools of skilled and industrious labor. Armstrong deemed it an education of the head, hand, and heart.<sup>3</sup> The model did not aim to produce college graduates prepared to birth a renaissance in the Black community like counterparts Howard and Fisk, where a liberal education in the classics was offered. Instead the education was manual in nature. This model of education influenced many HBCUs after Hampton. This could be attributed to the fact that

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<sup>1</sup> See Spivey (1978), especially chapters two and three .He gives an insightful analysis on the founding of Hampton and the replication of its model.

<sup>2</sup> The impact the founder had on the institutional norms of 1930 is discussed in detail within the *Hampton's Norm: Dignity over Protest* section of this research.

<sup>3</sup> Spivey, D. (1978), *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p. 3 (prelude).

most of the higher learning institutions created solely for Black education were founded by White religious organizations or White-controlled government agencies,<sup>4</sup> and mainly funded by White philanthropists, many whom happened to be merchants or industrialists<sup>5</sup> at the time. These industrialists and merchants needed a labor-force and not field-hands. The model's pedagogy birthed a specific campus culture by reinforcing the rewards of labor. James Anderson stated in his work, *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935* that by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the "Hampton-Tuskegee Idea" represented the dichotomy of the educational and social movement begun by ex-slaves. By teaching "self-help," model to its students, the students were to be taught the "dignity of labor." The model groomed students for jobs that would maintain a specific class level in America. The model also encouraged students not to vote or participate in any political forums. The higher education offered through the Hampton Model was in a sense creating a class of educated slaves.

Blacks received an education at Hampton Institute that in every way conformed to the status quo. There was no danger as some whites feared that industrial schooling would make the black competitive with the skilled labor force of the South. One student at Hampton observed that contrary to popular belief about Armstrong's views, he did not expect most Black laborers to become artisans. The General told blacks that the temporal salvation of the colored race was to be won out of the ground. They

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<sup>4</sup> According to Dubois and his report on Negro schools, the two main government entities that dealt with the founding of Negro Colleges were the Freedmen's Bureau, and individual states (State Colleges). The religious or Church schools were mainly Methodist, Baptist, or Presbyterian, and took over after the closing of The Freedman's Bureau.

<sup>5</sup> This is very clear at Hampton Institute. Major industrialists supported General Chapman at the time such as George Foster Peabody and Robert C. Ogden. Both served as trustees on Hampton's board, and both have buildings named after them on the campus.

were to be agricultural laborers or the unskilled menial workforce of industry.<sup>6</sup>

The model also made the students slaves to White leadership's<sup>7</sup> sense of morality. They were not to deem character by their own moral compass- instead it was believed that the Negro had no moral compass, and that work would instill one. While some scholars believed the moral character of the HBCU student was veiled and only needed to be nurtured through intellectual reasoning and self-development (seeking to know himself and his relation to the world).<sup>8</sup> Chapman did not agree. Consequently, the Hampton Model taught students that through labor and menial tasks they could be taught how to be moral beings (assuming that they already were not) and they spent a short amount of time dealing with intellectual strivings.

This model of higher education did not only disserve the Black male population; it also affected Black female education. Black women within this model were trained to become seamstresses, excellent housekeepers, and at best teachers that could perpetuate the Hampton model's norms. Anderson states that the Hampton model carried over into most of the Negro schools that were also being founded after the Civil war. Anderson argues that this education

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<sup>6</sup> Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. p.26.

<sup>7</sup> Small, S. August, (1979) The Yankee Schoolmarm in Freedmen's Schools: An Analysis of Attitudes, *Journal of Southern History* 45 : 381-402; Most of the Negro Colleges and school's head teachers and administrative leads were White northerners. This played heavily on the norms being passed through the black community. Forced religious ideas of morality, and subjective ideas of right and wrong when dealing with emotions, placement and movement of bodies, and spirituality were apart of most institutional norms at Negro Colleges in the first half of the century.

<sup>8</sup> Dubois, W.E.B. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folks*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg &Co. pp 88-109.

trained teachers to teach the black working class how to be content with their status as the grunt workers of an industrial and agricultural America.

Historian Donald Spivey also makes that distinction clear in his work *Schooling for the New Slavery*; He concurs with Anderson and writes that the Hampton Model of education was indeed indicative of the higher education offered to blacks at a majority of the Black Colleges during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Spivey asserts that before the 20<sup>th</sup> century Hampton was not seen as an institute of higher education per se, however, its model was used when creating many of the Negro colleges at that time. According to Spivey, this type of education did not lead to the uplifting of the race but the subjugation of it.

The Hampton Model's effect on the 20th century HBCU

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the HBCU, Hampton in particular, started to change its curriculum. According to Hampton's website, the school spent most of its focus in the latter part of the first decade through the 1920's on the rigorous process of receiving college accreditation.

In the Principal's report of 1929, Hampton President Dr. James Edward Gregg stated that "Hampton Institute is now a college." He went on to state that, "Every one of its collegiate divisions or schools—Agriculture, Home Economics, Education, Business, Building, Librarianship, Music—is fitting its students for their life-work as teachers or as practitioners in their chosen calling."<sup>9</sup>

"The number of HBCU's conferring baccalaureate degrees started to increase, and since by 1900 only 34 were doing so; we can assume that the 50 schools left to reach that level of accreditation were using some variation of the Hampton

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<sup>9</sup> Cited on Hampton University's website: <http://www.hamptonu.edu/about/history.cfm>.

model.”<sup>10</sup> However, a school that simply switches its gears in how it educates its students does not necessarily change vehicles. By 1930 Hampton Normal and Agricultural School became Hampton Institute; however, almost sixty years of the school’s Hampton Model culture was inherently inlaid in every brick of the new campus buildings. The Hampton model was White led; little to none of the administrative roles of the campus was held by Blacks.<sup>11</sup> The Hampton model took great pains to disenfranchise its students; 60 years after its inception it still affected “Hampton the College.” The Hampton model instilled a sense of moral depravity into its students so that it could then correct it. All of this was done to keep the Black community in a place of subjugation. To offer a curriculum that was no longer necessarily manual in nature meant that a greater emphasis had to be put on bringing the hidden curriculum of the Hampton model into the light. To keep students in line with the original vision of the founder student programming and activities needed to reinforce certain ideals. Hampton’s administration still aimed to educate their Black student population in moral character and dignity of work. The type of student matriculating through Hampton was politically and socially stifled because of the school’s origin. Hampton’s institutional norms held students at bay. The curriculum changed but

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<sup>10</sup> For estimations of black college enrollments at the turn of the century, see W.E.B. Du Bois (ed.), *The College-Bred Negro: Report of a Social Study Made Under the Direction of Atlanta University* (Atlanta, 1900), pp. 65-66; passim. In *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* by Clayborne Carson; *Black Students in Higher Education: Conditions and Experiences in the 1970s* by Gail E. Thomas Review by: V. P. Franklin. Whatever Happened to the College-bred Negro? *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Autumn, 1984), pp 411-418.

<sup>11</sup> The Hampton Script as well as the local City of Hampton paper *The Afro American* assert this. The assertions are documented further along and throughout this research.

the mission of the school did not. However the question can be asked did the student?

### **W.E.B. Dubois' Aspirations and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century HBCU**

In Dubois commentary "On the Training of Men" a commentary on Negro higher education from his 1903 work *The Souls of Black Folk* he formulates an assessment of the pre 20<sup>th</sup> century HBCU. His analysis is grimly clear, but the commentary closes with lofty institutional goals and clear aims for the 20<sup>th</sup> century HBCU. According to Dubois, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Negro colleges were quickly founded, inadequately equipped, and illogically distributed with no standard of accreditation. James Anderson shares Dubois' view of the perils Black education at the turn of the century in his work, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*. Anderson's work suggests that Black higher education wasn't even necessarily industrial or agricultural but a means to perpetuate a stinging curriculum that turned schools like Hampton and Tuskegee into cultural training grounds where teachers taught Black communities to be content with their status as the grunt workers of an industrial and agricultural America.<sup>12</sup>

In reaction to what the agricultural and industrial education perpetuated, Dubois warns the 20<sup>th</sup> century HBCU against the continual primary focus of industrial and agricultural education in HBCU curriculum and student life. Dubois states that emphasis had its place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and reminded Negroes that "before the temple of knowledge swing the gates of toil." [source??] In short,

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<sup>12</sup> See Spivey (1978) for a complete analysis of the social positioning of Negroes in industrial America.



labor-based education served as a contingency plan addressing the Negro problem; disarming a racially incensed and war-torn society by creating schools, that to anyone without a heart for the renaissance of the race, looked like no more than work camps. In consequence, the idea of training Negroes to help the South regain her economic standing through industry paved the way and loosed government funds for many HBCU's. Unfortunately, many HBCU's, specifically Hampton and Tuskegee, adopted this model that emphasized a "dignity of labor,"<sup>13</sup> and seemingly kept it as the final aim of their institution well after reconstruction and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century." Donald Spivey states in his research, *Schooling for the New Slavery*, this brand of education for blacks eventually swept across the Southern states during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. "In a sense," Spivey states, "the schoolhouse was to replace the stability lost by the demise of the institution of slavery."<sup>14</sup> The former statement by Spivey highlights why the initial endeavor of the HBCU could not afford to become the permanent educational aim for a race of people that had an anti-slavery culture to advance and a civilization to rebuild. Dubois states in his commentary the Black race needed a truly higher education, and that they were being denied it for less than honorable economic reasons.

...The tendency is here, born of slavery and quickened to renewed life, by the crazy imperialism of the day, to regard human beings as among the material resource of a land to be trained with an eye

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<sup>13</sup> Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p. 20. This term coined by Spivey and attributed to Hampton's Founder Armstrong, aptly summarizes Armstrong's philosophy on Black education.

<sup>14</sup> Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p 17.

single to future dividends. Race-Prejudices which keep brown and black men in their “places,” we are coming to regard as useful allies with such a theory, no matter how much they may dull the ambition and sicken the hearts of struggling human beings. And above all, we daily hear that an education that encourages aspiration, that sets the loftiest of ideals, and seeks as an end culture and character rather than bread-winning, is the privilege of White men and the danger and delusion of Black.<sup>15</sup>

Dubois states that in order for a true education to be obtained by Blacks, HBCU’s had to assess their 20<sup>th</sup> century aims and honestly answer three questions: what kind of institution are they: as an institution what do they teach; and what sort of men does the institution graduate?<sup>16</sup> The questions were important because Dubois tied the HBCU’s aspirations directly to Black cultural norms. Whatever norms a culture’s institutions advanced would be sewn into the fabric of that culture. In any society, America included, before the common school or normal school was established the Universities were. Dubois states that Harvard was built and celebrated before the common school movement caught on.<sup>17</sup> Before a system of education can be founded, or a culture designed; teachers of life must be developed. Dubois states these teachers of life would not teach Negroes their “place”, but “raise them out of the places where slavery debased them. Dubois states that the college-bred Negroes must create the

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<sup>15</sup> Dubois, W.E.B. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folks*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co. p. 93. This quote speaks to the urgent need of industrial workers in the south. Dubois states that the idea of industrial education, or the Hampton model- came into full effect during the decade starting with the year 1895, for it solved the economic and social problems of the era. He lamented over this, perhaps because he knew the implications it would have over the Negro College norms- decades after industrialization and even the Negro problem were no more.

<sup>16</sup> Dubois, W.E.B. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folks*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co. p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 104.

ultimate impact on the advancement of Black American culture. According to Dubois' definition of higher education, the college-bred Negro would not go to school to make money, become artisans, or tradesmen.<sup>18</sup> Rather, the HBCU student would compete with White graduates from popular institutions of education, work towards the cultural renaissance of the Negro, seek cooperation between the races, and above all develop men.<sup>19</sup> The student would serve as a foundational member of Black American culture by creating a stable political and educational space for Black Americans.<sup>20</sup>

By assessing the HBCUs' culturally advanced norms this research brings attention to whether or not the aspirations lined out by Dubois were adopted by 20<sup>th</sup> century HBCU administrations, and ultimately how HBCU students, specifically Hampton students, answered Dubois' call. If by the 20<sup>th</sup> century the institutional student programming, advanced by the administration, was not promoting a campus culture (even if the curriculum could not) that celebrated the true development of men so that the race could in turn be developed; they were indeed fighting against the progress of the race.

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<sup>18</sup> Dubois, W.E.B. (1903) *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. P.95.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A SEASON FOR PROTEST

#### Dr. Howe's Administration & Resignation

By the end of the 1930's Hampton students were starting to harshly criticize their education from the top down. There was a growing disaffection with Armstrong's founding principles, a thirst for progress, and therefore a rejection of the norm. The campus president during the 1930's was Yale graduate Arthur Howe, the son-in-law of Samuel Chapman Armstrong; the founder of Hampton Institute.<sup>1</sup> It could be assumed that Howe was selected through familial ties and that he would carry on the traditions that Armstrong put forth-advancing a norm of dignity over protest. By all accounts of literature coming from the student programming office and his addresses within the student paper that assumption can be seen as founded.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anonymous. (1971, November 29) . "Mrs. Arthur Howe Dead: Hampton Institute Trustee "[Abstract]." *The New York Times*.

<sup>2</sup> Howe, Arthur. (1932, January 16). President Howe's New Year message to Students, "Work for the greatest Good of the Greatest Number." *The Hampton Script*, 7(4), 1. Message from President Howe encourages students that he knows from whence they came-and intends to keep Hampton traditions alive. He also alludes to the retrenchment coming, and hard faculty losses to come.

Arthur Howe was a Yale football hero<sup>3</sup> and an ordained Presbyterian minister. He taught at both Dartmouth College and various eastern preparatory schools and served as the head coach of Yale's football team before taking his post at Hampton, and was ordained a Presbyterian minister.<sup>4</sup> Seemingly, the only link to Howe's past and his interest in running a Negro college<sup>5</sup> was his father-in-law. There is no record of Howe working with or writing about Black Americans in any capacity before his appointment to Hampton. He may have thought it was his Christian duty but it is more likely that he was appointed to fill a desperate need.

Howe was appointed on the heels of the untimely death by drowning of Hampton's President George P. Phenix. According to Hampton's student newspaper<sup>6</sup> Dr. Phenix was recently appointed in 1930 and eagerly embraced by students as the new President of Hampton Institute. 1930 was a pivotal year for Hampton because of its move from a trade or normal school to a college. Dr. Phenix predecessor Dr. James Edward Gregg commented on the change a year

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<sup>3</sup> "HOWE LIKE WHIRLWIND: Quarterback Helps Yale To Victory Over Syracuse; ELI TRIES ALL SORTS OF PLAYS". *The Sun, Baltimore, Md.* October 3, 1909.

<sup>4</sup> "Yale All-American Arthur Howe Dies". *The Lewiston Daily Sun*. March 29, 1955.

<sup>5</sup> "Mrs. Arthur Howe Dead: Hampton Institute Trustee". *The New York Times*. November 29, 1971.

<sup>6</sup> Howe, Arthur. (1932, January 16). President Howe's New Year message to Students, "Work for the greatest Good of the Greatest Number." *The Hampton Script*, 7(4), 1. Message from President Howe encourages students that he knows from whence they came-and intends to keep Hampton traditions alive. He also alludes to the retrenchment coming, and hard faculty losses to come.

before Dr. Phenix was appointed in his Principal's report of 1929.<sup>7</sup> Shortly after this announcement on July 1, 1930 the name of the school was changed from Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute to Hampton Institute and the title of Principal— given to Dr. George Phenix at the time—was changed to President. The change in name and function of the school along with the promotion of a true and beloved Hamptonian faculty member that had served on the campus since 1904 in various administrative positions caused an air of excitement for the students.<sup>8</sup> To lose him and get trapped with a man they did not know and who was not familiar with the rumblings of an independent student body, placed the students in a place of early disappointment with their new president Dr. Howe.

It can be assumed that students knew the background of Dr. Howe and deduced why he was so quickly chosen to the task. Students may have felt that with the rise of Dr. Phenix, a man that in student's words<sup>9</sup> was a "genius" with a grasp of details and an "honest wisdom" and through his founding of the Hampton Institute summer school" aimed to keep Hampton in actual contact with the educational field," that a change in the way they were viewed and treated at Hampton was about to shift. This was a man that worked his way to the top, and was not necessarily an industrialist trustee handpicked candidate. The northern

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.hamptonu.edu/about/history.cfm>

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous. (1930, October 15). Dr. Phenix, Recently Appointed President, Dies While In Bathing. *The Hampton Script*, 3(2), 1. Article describes admiration for Dr. Phenix, and student devastation at his untimely death.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

industrialists which served as the trustees of Hampton supported the place that the Hampton student body was in-disenfranchised. Phoenix background however, was inundated with the teaching of blacks at a normal school in Connecticut. It can be deduced that he simply loved the work. Howe had tremendous shoes to fill on a very short notice.

Howe's tenure was also a bit doomed because of financial woes. His tenure in the 1930's was in the midst of the great depression. The economic difficulties called for retrenchment<sup>10</sup>, but it seemed, according to a local Hampton newspaper, the laid off faculty was overwhelmingly Black.

Dr. Howe recently dismissed more than a dozen Hampton staff members and cut out numerous departments and courses in an effort to balance the budget. A majority of those fired were colored. An AFRO survey showed two whites for every colored teacher at Hampton and colored teachers are kept out of most supervisory and administrative positions.<sup>11</sup>

The paper also reported that Dr. Howe had been faced with increasing student and alumni agitation for certain reforms at Hampton. Larger salaried positions in the departments were reserved for White faculty only, and Black secretaries were not allowed. Students were calling for more administrative positions to be filled by

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<sup>10</sup> Howe, Arthur. (1932, January 16). President Howe's New Year message to Students, "Work for the greatest Good of the Greatest Number." *The Hampton Script*, 7(4), 1. Message from President Howe encourages students that he knows from whence they came-and intends to keep Hampton traditions alive. He also alludes to the retrenchment coming, and hard faculty losses to come.

<sup>11</sup> Anonymous. ( 1940, March 2) Hampton Seeks a New President, An Editorial. *The Afro American*. 48(29)1.

colored persons-specifically a dean of women and they called for freedom of press, and ironically –seeing that Dr. Howe was a national collegiate football star and coach-better athletic coaching. Hampton student newspapers are littered with articles and editorials commenting on the strained student-faculty relations throughout his tenure. Many measures were taken to address the issue including student-faculty dinners<sup>12</sup>, student-faculty panels<sup>13</sup>, and even a monthly column in the student newspaper<sup>14</sup> for faculty members to write to students. However it all seems to have been to no avail. The student relationship faculty and administration was irrevocably broken.

Consequently, it seems the last straw for the student body and the last taxation upon Howe's position came in the untimely dismissal of a popular Black English instructor Dr. James Ivy. It was reported that he was dismissed because of departmental animosities without due notification. The interesting fact about his departure is that the head of the English department George A. Kuyper was White and a close confidant to President Howe. That did not sit well with students. According to the local Black newspaper in Hampton, VA, *The Afro-American*, the students protested. It states, "Students have demanded Ivy's

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<sup>12</sup> Anonymous. (1939, January 28). Student-Faculty Dinners to be Continued in Feb. *The Hampton Script*, 6(7), 1.

<sup>13</sup> Anonymous. (1939, January 14). Student-Faculty Panel to be held January 30. *The Hampton Script*, 6(6), 1,4. The student council appointed a group of students composed of faculty and students to review the points of student-faculty contention, and present them to the student body and administrative board for discussion. The idea was that a solution would be made and any conflict would be removed by the administration.

<sup>14</sup> Faculty Views was a column featured in Hampton Scripts from 1937-1939. It was created to foster student-faculty relationships.



reinstatement and Kuyper's resignation. As a result Ivy was granted a year's salary and Kuyper has recently been given "a leave of absence to study." It is understood that Kuyper has been one of President Howe's most intimate counselors." (The *Afro-American*, March, 1940)

Even with that small victory in tow Dr. Howe's resignation was probably more of a response to the negative report birthed from a trustee endorsed investigation of Hampton's administration and student programming, than student protest. The investigation resulted in a clear display of the weaknesses of Howe's administration. It can be assumed that one of those weaknesses was his inability to get the students and administration to live without protest. The *Afro-American* stated the limitations of student protest on the shift in administration attitudes clearly. They made it clear that the injustices the students pinned on Dr. Howe did not start with him, and would not end with his student supported resignation.

He inherited these injustices toward students and faculty when he came into office, and unless there is a general cleaning out they will remain after his departure. Unrest will continue to plague the Hampton administration until:

1. Jim Crow is abolished at Dixie Hospital;
2. The faculty and the higher salaries are more equally divided between the races;
3. Students can have free press without faculty coercion;
4. White faculty members quit uniting with the white town of Hampton to keep colored faculty and students in their places.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Anonymous. ( 1940, March 2) Hampton Seeks a New President, An Editorial. The *Afro American*. 48(29)1.

However the resignation along with the surrounding events inevitably had a profound effect on Hampton's student culture. The restitution given to their beloved Ivy, "removal" of Kuyper, the interim appointment of Miss Estelle Thomas-a Hampton graduate-to the post of acting Dean of Women<sup>16</sup>, and the idea of presenting a colored presidential candidate to the board of trustees<sup>17</sup> boosted student morale and highlighted their rejection of the status quo norms imparted by their founder.<sup>18</sup> This benchmark is important to the research because it frames not only a reason for student rejection of Hampton's institutional norms-confidence, but it also proves the rejection of the 1930's administrative endorsed norms. With this event the students were confident in their ability to influence if not completely enact change.

### **The Scottsboro Trials**

The Scottsboro trials were a landmark in Black history and of consequence to the Hampton student because of its known status as the beginning of the end to all white juries in America<sup>19</sup>. The Scottsboro trials were a

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<sup>16</sup> Anonymous. (1939, November 11). Miss Thomas New Dean: Replaces Dr. Van Wagenen On Leave of Absence. *The Hampton Script*, 12(3), 1. " This appointment of Miss Thomas is indeed a " red-letter " event in the annals of Hampton's history, since it is the first time a colored woman has been given such recognition-?".

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous. ( 1940, March 2) Hampton Seeks a New President, An Editorial. *The Afro American*. 48(29)1.

<sup>18</sup> The impact the founder had on the institutional norms of 1930 is discussed in detail within the Hampton's Norm: Dignity over Protest section of this research.

<sup>19</sup> Acker, James R. (2007), *Scottsboro and Its Legacy: The Cases That Challenged American Legal and Social Justice*, New York, NY: Praeger.

series of court proceedings for nine Black boys<sup>20</sup> from Scottsboro Alabama accused of raping two White girls while hoboing on a freight train traveling between Chattanooga and Memphis. Though there was minimal physical evidence to convict them and only the word of two white women who accused them of the rape and a group of White boys that that accused them of attacking them on the train; all nine boys were originally convicted and sentenced to death in 1931, except for the 12 year-old Roy Wright. Elements of the three rushed trials included frame-up, an all white jury, and little to no legal representation for the boys.

The American Communist Party appealed all nine convictions to The Alabama Supreme Court, where seven of the eight remaining convictions were upheld, however one dissenting Chief Justice<sup>21</sup> ruled that the boys were not given an impartial jury, fair trial, fair sentencing, or effective counsel, eventually sending the cases back in lower courts which led to a change of venue. At one point in the case one of the alleged victims admitted to fabricating her story of rape-yet a guilty verdict was still reached, and appeals were made. Even with clear evidence of their innocence, the cases were ultimately tried three times, resulting in a jury with one Black member during the third trial, but rendering a guilty verdict. Nevertheless, charges were dropped for four of the nine original

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Chief Justice John C. Anderson dissented. He wrote: "While the constitution guarantees to the accused a speedy trial, it is of greater importance that it should be by a fair and impartial jury, *ex vi termini*, a jury free from bias or prejudice, and, above all, from coercion and intimidation." *Weems et al. v. State*, Id., at 214 (1932).

defendants and all except for two defendants served prison sentences for crimes they more than likely did not commit that ranged from 75 years to death.

The trials and appeals from 1931-1937 and during this time many international organizations were actively protesting the verdicts of the trials.<sup>22</sup> However, many HBCU's however did not, Hampton included. This case is an important benchmark for this research because it provides a time period for the student response to Hampton Institute's administrative norms to be observed. Recognizing its importance, Langston Hughes begins his observation of the Hampton administration's advanced norms with a nod to the Scottsboro Trial.

I was amazed to find at many Negro schools and colleges a year after the arrest and conviction of the Scottsboro boys, that a great many teachers and students knew nothing of it, or if they did the official attitude would be, why bring that up?" I asked at Tuskegee<sup>23</sup>, only a few hours from Scottsboro, who from there had been to the trial. Not a soul from what I could discover. And the demonstrations in every capital in the civilized world for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys, so far as I know not one Alabama Negro school until now has held even a protest meeting. (And in Alabama, we have the largest colored school in the world, Tuskegee, and one of our best colleges, Talladega.) But speaking of protest meetings-this was my experience at Hampton...<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See Langston Hughes Cowards from the Colleges.

<sup>23</sup> Tuskegee can be used as a strong comparison to Hampton. Asking students and teachers at either institution would probably have given Hughes identical responses, because of the norms being advanced at the institutions. The two institutions were almost synonymous during the first half of the century because they were both built upon the Hampton model. Tuskegee was created by Booker T. Washington at the behest and under the direction of Hampton's founder, Samuel Armstrong.

<sup>24</sup> Hughes, L. (August, 1934) . Cowards from the Colleges. *Crisis*, 41, 226-28. In Hughes, L. *Fight for Freedom and Other Writings on Civil Rights: collected Works of Langston Hughes*, Vol 10. C.C. De Santis, (Ed.). Missouri: University of Missouri Press.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**THE HBCU NORM: DIGNITY OVER PROTEST**  
**A HBCU Audit: Cowards from the Colleges**

Langston Hughes, on a lecture/performance circuit in the 1930's, toured more than fifty HBCU's to recite his poetry. While there he noticed a specific set of norms being advanced at the institutions and the eradication of student responses to those norms. The former he believed caused the Black graduates to be educated cowards instead of cultural leaders. In 1934 Langston Hughes wrote a commentary about his experiences on the HBCU campuses. However, a great portion of his essay was directed at Hampton Institute, no doubt because of its status as a model HBCU. In other words from his own firsthand account of the student programming and student activities and publications; Hughes deemed that that Hampton was advancing the norms of political and social cowards and not collegians. Hughes stated in is commentary "Many of our institutions apparently are not trying to make men and women of their students at all-they are doing their best to produce spineless Uncle Toms, uninformed and full of mental and moral evasions."<sup>1</sup> This was a direct attack at all HBCU's,

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<sup>1</sup> Hughes, L. (August, 1934) . Cowards from the Colleges. *Crisis*, 41, 226-28. In Hughes, L. *Fight for Freedom and Other Writings on Civil Rights: collected Works of Langston Hughes*, Vol 10. C.C. De Santis, (Ed.). Missouri: University of Missouri Press.

however, Hughes goes on to use Fisk, Tuskegee, and most importantly Hampton to provide the supporting evidence to his hypothesis of the institutions aims Hughes takes affront to Hampton's separation of the sexes at social events, and other petty yet legit grievances.<sup>2</sup> But his real repulsion came at the administrative chokehold on the student's right to protest gross injustice to their own. During his visit hat Hampton two major events happened in a single weekend that shook the emotional core of the student body. First a very popular women's dean, Juliette Derricotte, from Fisk University was killed from injuries sustained in an automobile accident because White Georgia hospitals refused her for treatment. Secondly a recent Hampton alumnus who was the football coach for Alabama A&M was beaten and killed by a White mob on his way to watch his team play. Understanding the close knit nature of HBCU students, their alumni and faculty; Hughes stated that the Hampton students were highly affected.

The two happenings sent a wave sent a wave of anger over the campus where I was a visitor. Two double tragedies of color on one day-and most affecting to teachers and students because the victims were "of their own class, one a distinguished and widely travelled young woman, the other a popular graduate and athlete."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 214-15. Throughout Hughes article he takes the time to pick out some of the annoying habits of HBCU's including dress codes and dining seating charts. Of his grievances Hughes states: To combine these charges very simply: Many of our institutions apparently are not trying to make men and women of their students at all-they are doing their best to produce spineless Uncle Toms, uninformed, and full of mental and moral evasions.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 216.

Hughes analysis sheds light on characteristics of college-bred Negroes from Hampton and other schools at the time. One characteristic is acknowledging the dichotomy between the Negroes behind the gates<sup>4</sup> and the Negroes outside of them. The other was political apathy towards subjects outside of the campus society. The latter was a characteristic shared on many predominantly White campuses as well. In her book *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* Historian Paula Fass found that "neither political activism nor political radicalism was important on the campus, for political subjects were outside the attention and interest of the campus society." She went on to conclude that "the young did not feel either the need or the desire to change this political system. They were optimistically and very consciously the beneficiaries of that system, and they aspired to succeed on its terms when it came time to assure their full roles and responsibilities."<sup>5</sup> Her assertion about post-war college students fits into the Black College experience as well as the White, because these students were also seemingly benefitting from an education that secured them a place- even if it was below their White counter parts- within the American

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<sup>4</sup> A play on Dubois words: "“before the temple of knowledge swing the gates of toil.” The college-bred Negro was seemingly protected by the gates of their institutions that sought to develop the highest moral character amongst its students through hard work and religious discipline. Dubois, W.E.B. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folks*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg &Co. pp 88-109.

<sup>5</sup> Fass, P. (1977). *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* New York, NY : Oxford University Press USA, p. 360. In *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* by Clayborne Carson; *Black Students in Higher Education: Conditions and Experiences in the 1970s* by Gail E. Thomas Review by: V. P. Franklin. Whatever Happened to the College-bred Negro. *History of Education Quarterly* , Vol. 24, No. 3 (Autumn, 1984), pp 411-418.

society. Perhaps it was not until two of their own who epitomized what a college education could do for American Blacks were morbidly reminded that there was no secure place for the sons and daughters of slaves in the American dream that Hampton students decided to try to put their spines on display, despite the campus norm. This speaks volumes to why there may not have been much protest to the Scottsboro case before Hughes visit, but an immediate attention to these two events. Derricotte was not a Hampton Alumna, yet she was still regarded as one of their own. The college bred Negro went to college to avoid the perils White America imposed upon non-bred Negroes such as the Scottsboro boys, and if that was clearly not the case-now was the time to protest!

The attempted protest meeting that Hughes witnessed Hampton students try to rally allows Hughes commentary to give the current research a clear glance at institution norms vs. Student response and the outcome of it all. The Hampton senior students asked Hughes to come to a meeting in regards to Ms. Derricotte and their own dead alumnus- Hughes eagerly obliged. Once there he found that the students wanted to hold a protest meeting in the chapel to memorialize the dead and publicly object the white brutality that claimed their lives. However before they could have their meeting at the chapel the faculty and administration had to sign off on the use of campus buildings and student activities. Hughes describes what happens when the faculty representation, the dean of men. Shows up and shuts the students down.



...The faculty sent their representative, Major Brown, a Negro (who I believe is the dean of men)...Furthermore he went on; Hampton did not like the word "protest." That was not Hampton's way. He and Hampton believed in moving slowly and quietly, and with dignity.<sup>6</sup>

### **Father of the Norm: Samuel Armstrong Chapman**

The dignity the Major mentioned was Hampton's foundational principle set in motion by the institute's founder Samuel Chapman Armstrong; the head of the freedman's Bureau in Hampton during reconstruction. It must be noted that Hampton was founded by a man that was placed in position to replace the first superintendent, C.B. Wilder,<sup>7</sup> who sympathized with the newly freed Blacks. As a true and early implementer of a punitive reconstruction, he advocated the redistribution of land from wealthy war torn White owners to the freedmen during the last years of the war and after the enactment of the Proclamation of Emancipation. However once the war was over the Lincoln-Johnson style of reconstruction took effect and the theme of that movement was reconciliation. Not reconciliation between freed slave and former White owner; but a reconciliation of North and South economies and legislature. Therefore when the upset former White (wealthy) property owners of Hampton began to incessantly complain to the national head of the Freedman's Bureau General Oliver Otis

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<sup>6</sup> Hughes, L. (August, 1934) . Cowards from the Colleges. *Crisis*, 41, 226-28. In Hughes, L. *Fight for Freedom and Other Writings on Civil Rights*: collected Works of Langston Hughes, Vol 10. C.C. De Santis, (Ed.). Missouri: University of Missouri Press.

<sup>7</sup> See Spivey (1978) Chapter One.

Howard about Wilder's slow action to defraud the new Black landowners and restore their land, he acted swiftly and replaced Wilder with Armstrong. William McFeely sums up the switch of leadership in his research, *Yankee Stepfather; General O.O. Howard and the Freedmen*,<sup>8</sup> "Bureau men Howard removed from the South were considered undesirable and unfit, not because of laziness or dishonesty, but because when they tried to help freedmen, powerful white men complained."<sup>9</sup> In research it is clear why Armstrong would be better suited for the white landowners, and less of a help to the Black freedmen. Spivey highlights the founder's basic attitude towards the Blacks he was very eager to reposition into Hampton society "Freedman as a class," General Armstrong stated "are destitute of ambition; their complacency in poverty and filth is a curse...They have no aspirations, or healthy ambitions; everything about them, their clothes, their houses, their lands, their fences all bear witness to their shiftless propensity."<sup>10</sup> In essence Armstrong felt giving the Blacks land and civil rights would be an unwise waste on an inept people. In consequence, Hampton's founder quickly returned the lands to their former rebel owners and did so in good conscience.<sup>11</sup> He then

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<sup>8</sup> McFeely, W. (1994). *Yankee Stepfather; General O.O. Howard and the Freedmen*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Chapman Armstrong to Mrs. Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, 30 April 1867, *Ludlow Collection* 3, p. 586. In Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p 8.

<sup>11</sup> See Spivey (1978) Chapter One.

founded Hampton Institute with the mind to advance a single cultural norm: dignity over protest.

Spivey stated that Armstrong “proposed to educate blacks with a special kind of schooling, one that would advance reconciliation between North and south and at the same time secure in the southland lasting peace and order between the races.”<sup>12</sup> In essence Armstrong served the interests of Southern economic rehabilitation, more than Negro Higher education. Armstrong advocated the training and dispersal of Black teachers throughout the Black south to solve the race problem. The cultural norms that the Hampton trained teachers were disseminating into their Black communities advocated the dignity of labor over the protest of injustices. At Hampton Armstrong promoted “the production of wise leaders, of peacemakers, rather than noisy and dangerous demagogues.”<sup>13</sup> Armstrong sought to advance a norm of dignity among Hampton students that was perpetuated by a hidden curriculum that imbued a “habit of restraint<sup>14</sup>” among the student population.

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<sup>12</sup> Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p 16.

<sup>13</sup> Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, P. 17. It should be noted that at the time of Hampton’s founding that a franchised slave was deemed as a dangerous threat to the southern way of life.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Greenwood Peabody, *Education for Life: The Story of Hampton Institute* (New York: Doubleday, page and Company, 1918), pp. 274-275 . In Spivey, D. (1978) . *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Armstrong had a very low opinion of the population he was determined to educate. Spivey states, In Armstrong's list of black character deficiencies he included "improvidence, low ideas of honor and morality, and a general lack of directive energy, judgment and foresight."<sup>15</sup> Spivey also asserts that Armstrong thought it fair to state, by way of classification, that "a large third, say three millions" of the eight million or more "Negroes are a 'low down' shiftless class...lazy...living hand to mouth...grossly immoral." Spivey states that Armstrong's plan was to alter Black character. "The negro's deficiencies of character," Armstrong states, "are worse for him and for the world than his mere ignorance."<sup>16</sup> Armstrong professed that his aim was to "civilize" the Blacks, to instill them with "general deportment...habits of living and of labor...and right ideas of life and duty."<sup>17</sup> The Negroes Armstrong proclaimed, "are to form the working classes..."<sup>18</sup>

Armstrong's low opinion of Blacks shaped the foundation of Hampton's student programming during its establishment in 1867 and left a clear mark on

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<sup>15</sup> American Missionary Magazine 13 (June 1896) , p.123. In Spivey, D. (1978) . *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Chapman Armstrong to Howard Potter, 3 February 1891, p.4. *Armstrong Family Papers*. In Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Armstrong, Samuel C. (1908). *Ideas on Education*, Hampton, VA: Hampton Institute Press, p.4. Issued for the Armstrong League of Hampton Workers. In Spivey, D. (1978). *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p 22.

the student programming almost 60 years later when Hughes made the visit that fed his commentary, *Cowards form the Colleges*. It can be assumed that this lies in the fact that the institutions leaders were White leaders handpicked for decades by a board and administration that was groomed by Armstrong and his supporters. More specifically the imprinted norm was undoubtedly upheld and advanced by the administration at the time of Hughes 1932 visit<sup>19</sup> because the Hampton Administration was lead by President Art Howe- Armstrong's son-in-law.

Armstrong's ideology translated into an institutionally advanced norm of dignity over protest; specifically reinforcing the idea that as Blacks, the Hampton students were morally deficient and their educational experience should focus on moral development and human citizenship- not the protest of injustices to their culture and fellow Black brethren. The idea was if they silence their rage, line up, and take their proper place they would escape the social and political genocide that plagued many Blacks such as the Scottsboro Boys. This reinforces the earlier analysis of Hughes statement from his commentary about the students' anger and shock of the two racial casualties stemming from the victims being "one of their own." In reaction, the institutionally advanced norm was eagerly questioned when the students saw that their status as Hampton college-bred

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<sup>19</sup> Hughes visit that sparked some of his negative remarks about Hampton is chronicled in the March, 1932 issue of the Hampton Script. The students were very excited to receive him, and deemed it an extreme honor.

Negroes did not ensure a safe -even if by some accounts proper -place in American society.

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **ADVANCING THE NORM: STUDENT HANDBOOKS**

The Hampton Institute student handbook for the years 1932-1933<sup>1</sup> was entitled *Directions for Students*. It was both written and approved by the administration. Therefore the handbook is a viable source for the norms and ideals being advanced by the administration. It must be noted that during the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Administration was lead by White men.<sup>2</sup> Given the historical connotations; it creates an intriguing cultural study. The motives of these powerful men and the norms they embedded within student programming for a powerless generation are developed within the handbook. Used as a reference for student programming, it served as the code of conduct for both the institute's high school and college student body. The handbook made it very clear in its opening statements that the students were expected to apply the hand book to their daily campus life. It states that it does not desire a student to enroll at Hampton or to matriculate if the student cannot conform to the regulations set forth with a "cheerful willingness." Students were to follow the

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<sup>1</sup> Hampton Institute. (1932) *Directions for Students*. Hampton, VA: Hampton Institute. The student handbook.

<sup>2</sup> Hampton's presidents from 1900-1930 were Dr. H.B. Frissell, Rev. James E. Gregg, Dr. George P. Phenix, and Rev Art Howe respectively; all White men. *A Guide to the Archives of Hampton Institute* (Westport, Conn., and London, England: Greenwood Press, 1985).

regulations to the letter-or risk immediate withdrawal. The word choice of conform conjures the idea of changing the students from their native stance into something acceptable; normalizing the administration's ideals. As a result, the book reads more than just a list of do's and don'ts; it illustrates all the Hampton student was. It reveals the secret of the revered Hampton student a Bible of sorts. The idea of conforming students into institutions' ideals by advancing a certain set of norms throughout the student body is not exclusive to HBCU's. The research stated early on that cultural norms are advanced within educational institutions. However, in 1930-1940 the mis-education was more likely within the HBCU and the cultural stakes were higher because of social and political position of Black Americans, therefore the conformation that the handbook introduces raises' questions of institutional deviance.

The book opens with its purpose; "to insure proper and becoming conduct." The tone of the former statement asserts two things-the Hampton student was not trusted to ensure their own proper conduct without the guidance of the statements within the handbook, and that the Hampton administration believed as a governing body, they were. The handbook explains the goal of the Hampton student should be to maintain the norm of an irreproachable conduct. However the word irreproachable is subjective. The assumption has to be made that the Hampton administration, White men, defined ill reproach, and that its definition is outlined in the handbook. The idea of having a student body of



irreproachable Black students in southern, VA is not an outlying thought. Black students that can be viewed as a physical, political, or social threat to the community-the white community in particular, would not serve Hampton's interests. But a cultural norm of students maintaining their dignity or moral character over protesting injustices and seeking self-actualization very well could. The question is how did the administration maintain and sustain a visible and hidden social curriculum that enforced that norm? And did the students adopt it without reservation? It's been observed that the Hampton administration did its best to address every part of the Black student's life with a regulation that proposed to students a consequence of moral development. The idea was to censure every part of the student's autonomy so that when a moment to protest did arise- students were one: not self-reliant enough to immediately make that decision, and two were apathetic towards the need to protest because of their false sense of security stemming from their college-bred dignity. Fass shares Hughes belief in this parallel in her book by stating that he denounced the "Cowards from the Colleges" "who submitted to petty parietal regulations of school officials without protest"<sup>3</sup> The student handbook can be broken down into

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<sup>3</sup> Fass, P. (1977). *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* New York, NY : Oxford University Press USA, p. 360. In *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* by Clayborne Carson; *Black Students in Higher Education: Conditions and Experiences in the 1970s* by Gail E. Thomas Review by: V. P. Franklin. Whatever Happened to the College-bred Negro. *History of Education Quarterly* , Vol. 24, No. 3 (Autumn, 1984), pp 411-418.

a governance of the Hampton's student's social/emotional strivings (gender roles), physical strivings (military drill), and spiritual strivings (Christian duty).

### **Gender Roles and Military Drill**

The Hampton Student handbook gives us a peek into the treatment of Black women in particular on Black college campuses. This glance is not often seen in scholarship. Throughout the history of Black colleges, female students have been in the majority.<sup>4</sup> However, according to Marybeth Gasman within the scholarship about Black colleges and its students, the Black women and the relationship between Black men and women on Black college campuses has been omitted.<sup>5</sup> Historian Ronald E. Burchard asked the question in his essay "Outthinking and Outflanking the Owners of the World': A Historiography of the African American Struggle for Education,"; what agencies contributed to the education of black womanhood?" Scholar Florence Bonner stated in her essay "Addressing Gender Issues in the Historically Black College and University Community, "that the resistance to discuss gender roles on Black college campuses comes from the desire to protect the false sense of social defense they were established to create.

Foundation of religious-based formal education and the popular argument that these institutions provide a constant social defense against racism have created a powerful torque of resistance to

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<sup>4</sup> Gasman, M. (2007) Swept under the Rug? A Historiography of Gender and Black Colleges. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(4) p. 760-805.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

discussions focusing on the manner in which women have been treated and educated at [Black colleges]<sup>6</sup>

However, after one glance at the schedule from Hampton's 1926-1927 school year<sup>7</sup> displays a clear delineation of gender roles can be found however, this differs from the norms at White institutions of the time that advanced a patriarchal culture.<sup>8</sup> Early 20<sup>th</sup> century Hampton students were a part of a politically, socially, and at times physically<sup>9</sup> disenfranchised generation. Consequently, the administration did not seek to maintain a power structure within the Black students 'culture-instead it sought to assign roles that would keep both the Negro male and female student "in their place," on and off campus. The handbook spends very little time addressing the student body (men

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<sup>6</sup> Bonner, Florence. (2001) Addressing gender issues in the historically black college and university community: A challenge and call to action. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 70 (3), 176-91.

<sup>7</sup> This schedule represents the school before it was officially a college three academic years later. However, Hampton was at the time working on their collegiate accreditation, and it can be assumed this attitude towards the different needs for male and female education did not dramatically change within a three year period. According to student newspaper articles from 1930-1940 much of the schedule was the same. Men still had military drill and women still had compulsory chapel.

<sup>8</sup> Faragher, John Mack and Florence Howe, eds. *Women and Higher Education In American History*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company Press, 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Beck, E. M, & TolNay. S. E. (1990) The Killing Fields of the Deep South: The Market for Cotton and the Lynching of Blacks, 1882-1930. *American Sociological Review*, 55(4), 526-539. The political, physical, and social disenfranchisement is shown clearly through the random acts of violence against Blacks and lynchings of the time. The Hampton students of 1930-1940 came of age in a time where the lynching of Blacks were common and race riots like that of Tulsa in 1921 reminded them that a space in the political sphere of southern America did not come without blood. The declining importance of agriculture and poor financial conditions that plagued this decade also added to the violent acts against young Blacks and political unrest in the south.

and women) as a whole. Within the first ten pages the directions for conduct split into a set for men and a set for women. This reinforces the idea of fundamental differences between the sexes and the rules echo the inequality. It must be noted that the Hampton Model was founded upon a clear differentiation in the way women and men were educated. In Anderson's<sup>10</sup> analysis of the Hampton Model he noted that from the model's inception, females received less regular training than male students. Female students were expected to learn and master the domestic trades such as washing and ironing. It seems that almost six decades later the way women were being educated still differed greatly from the men.

The first difference in expectations for men and women is seen in their daily schedules (see fig 1). At first glance we see the two sexes barely, if ever, interact outside of meals. This Victorian code of behavior was very popular at most Black colleges. Gasman states that students were discouraged from all forms of unsupervised association between females and males.<sup>11</sup> Their daily

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<sup>10</sup> See Anderson (1988).

<sup>11</sup> Gasman, M. (2007). Swept under the Rug? A Historiography of Gender and Black College. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(4), 760-805. The separation of the sexes was an institutionally advanced norm at most HBCU's. Gasman believes that this was a way to keep women and men moral, and separate them from their sexually immoral past. Many Whites, including Christian Northerners, believed that Blacks were innately hyper-sexual beings that needed to be taught to control their immoral desires. What is interesting is that these same Victorian codes have lasting effects even on 21<sup>st</sup> century HBCU campuses. Hampton in particular, according to the 2011 freshman handbook does not allow the visitation of opposite sex to dorms during the first freshman semester. Visitation rights must be earned. This is interesting

schedule included work and classes; with more emphasis of work being put on the male student.

<b>II. SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR YOUNG MEN</b> (Subject to change by order of the Dean of Men) <b>Daily Schedule</b> 6:15 a.m.—Rising bell 6:45 a.m.—Breakfast 7:35 a.m.—Trade School classes begin 8:00 a.m.—Work students begin work (except in departments where other arrangements are necessary) 12:15 p.m.—Battalion forms for dinner 12:15 p.m.—Dinner 1:00 p.m.—Work resumed 1:30 p.m.—Classes begin 4:05 p.m.—(Drill—Wednesday only) 6:00 p.m.—Supper		<b>III. SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR YOUNG WOMEN</b> (Subject to change by order of the Dean of Women) <b>Daily Schedule</b> 6:00 a.m.—Rising bell 6:45 a.m.—Breakfast 7:45 a.m.—Morning work 8:15 a.m.—First school bell 12:15 p.m.—Dinner 1:20 p.m.—Afternoon school bell 6:00 p.m.—Supper 6:30 p.m.—Chapel 7:05 p.m.—Study hour begins 10:00 p.m.—Lights out	
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Figure 1: The 1926-1927 Hampton Student Schedule<sup>12</sup>

The male schedule designates up to five hours for work sessions whereas the female schedule designates thirty minutes. If the origin of work sessions<sup>13</sup> at Hampton is taken into account it can be inferred that the character or dignity of men is of greater concern to the Hampton Administration than that of their women. And as stated earlier Hampton's education

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considering that many pre-dominantly white colleges and universities have freshman year Co-ed dorms.

<sup>12</sup> Hampton Institute. (1926) *Directions for Students*. Hampton VA . Hampton Student Schedule from 1926-1927 School Year.

<sup>13</sup> Hampton Institute. (1930) *Visitors' Handbook*. Hampton, VA: Hampton Institute, 8. Work sessions at Hampton were not trade or vocational based. According to the handbook it was entirely outside of the vocational work of the classroom, and any daily work of the institution that could possibly be done by students (anything from janitorial work to office clerks) was completed by them. The reasons quoted in the handbook for these non- vocational work sessions are as follows: (1) to provide opportunities for self-help and (2) to carry out the principals of the founder: that work with the hands is of high disciplinary value, physically, intellectually, and morally.

dealt almost exclusively in the business of dignity and character. Keeping the man with a toiling hand creates a cultural mindset that cannot be ignored.

Another glaring difference in their schedules is the absence of military discipline from the women's schedule. This is in direct comparison to the lack of daily mandatory chapel services for the men; reinforcing the idea of discipline for men and Christian morals for women, a clear dichotomy of gender roles. This dichotomy feeds directly into the larger institutionally advanced norm of dignity over protest. As a Black woman in 1930's America there was not much opportunity to bare your pride; but plenty of opportunities to protest. The crimes against Black women in the south was a factor in the development of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Black womanhood, even on the college campuses<sup>14</sup> - not to mention the domestic battles they often faced at home with an angry and emasculated Black man. Educated Black women of the time found it extremely hard to be respected by other educated Black men in every sphere of professional and personal life. One woman Lucy Diggs Slowe, Dean of women at Howard University stated her own battle on this front in a memorandum about sexual harassment on the college campus. When confronted by a parent about the sexual harassment their

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<sup>14</sup> Patricia Bell-Scott, "To Keep My Self-Respect: Dean Lucy Diggs Slowe's 1927 Memorandum on the Sexual Harassment of Black Women," *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 9 (1997): 70-76. Lucy Diggs Slowe's memorandum on sexual harassment gives an unabashed look at the state of Black women's affairs on Black College campuses for students and faculty. First, a student is subjected to sexual harassment, and then Dean Slowe is attacked. It can be assumed that this was the state of Black women's education on Negro college campuses during the first half of the century.

daughter faced in a professor's class, through his use of vulgar language, Diggs shares the attitude of dignity she was supposed to take-but instead chose to protest.

From the time this case [i.e., the sexual harassment incident] happened down to the present, I have not had the cordial support of the President. When the time came to raise salaries, he raised mine \$200 and raised other Deans with qualifications no better than mine in amounts ranging from \$850 to \$1,150... He, without explanation, ex[c]luded me from his conferences with the Academic Deans, although prior to 1930 the Dean of Men and the Dean of Women had sat with the Board of Deans. He has never sympathetically studied the real work of the Dean of Women, and still seems to have a wrong conception of her function. He confuses her with a matron... I have tried in every way to correct this but can get no co-operation from the President.<sup>15</sup>

It can be assumed, due to the proximity of the schools, and publication of the memorandum that Hampton students were aware of Slowe's complaints. However, not one single article in the student newspaper from 1930-1940 mentioned female rights.

The administration desired for the male Hampton student to internalize the ideals of the military. Students were formed into battalions and given military grade inspections. They wore uniforms everyday with an exception of Saturday afternoons.

General Armstrong, from his experience as a Colonel of colored troops in the Civil War, believed firmly that military training forms

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<sup>15</sup> In Dean Lucy Diggs Slowe's 1927 Memorandum on the Sexual harassment of Black Women (as cited in Bell-Scott, 1997).

habits of self-control, respect for authority, precision, orderliness, cleanliness, upright bearing, and self-respect. In order that these virtues might be developed in the students the young men were organized in a school battalion, with the commandant in charge.<sup>16</sup>

The military style of schooling instills a sense of self-discipline however; many think it enforces a lack of individuality or personal freedom. The military drill for the men was to ensure self regard and protection for their community-yet they were trained in a dismounted state and without arms. This type of military training is similar to the training colored troops endured in a segregated military. The same conditions Hampton's founder commanded a colored army under.<sup>17</sup> The military drill also controlled a lot of the male student's physical movement and dictated the most basic of personal tasks. Male students were assigned to a battalion when they enrolled. Each battalion was led by a commandant. The commandant assigned each student their seat in the dining-room and chapel. If a student was not able to decide where they wanted to sit to have their evening meal, how could they be expected to see their personal power to protest? The dignity was not in their individual minds or characters it was in their ability to work and follow the rules set forth by the administration.

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<sup>16</sup> Hampton Institute. (1930) *Visitors' Handbook*. Hampton, VA: Hampton Institute, 10.

<sup>17</sup> Many times colored troops were not allowed to bear arms during their training, and did not have the basic equipment their White counterparts did. General Armstrong was a commander of colored troops during the civil war- he carried the military style of discipline over into Hampton's campus culture.



## Christian Duty

Female students did not endure the military training; however they were commended to chapel services every day. This evokes the idea of tying religion to moral training. According to the handbook female students were to report to chapel everyday unlike their male counterparts who only had mandated chapel once a week. Again, the idea of mandating a chapel service for students was not unique to the HBCU itself- but it's consequences on the type of students it produces was. Religion was often used to keep slaves in check. The Hampton chapel was where the word of God was imparted and new rules introduced-it was compulsory for students.<sup>18</sup>

The main student newspaper at Hampton Institute from 1930-1940 was the *Hampton Script*. The newspaper was four pages and by the time period's standard, quite robust. A monthly publication, it covered events upcoming and past. During this decade the Script was recognized as an award winning collegiate newspaper, a model for other Negro College publications. According to the October 7, 1939 issue of the Script it won first prize in the national Negro

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<sup>18</sup> Hampton Institute. (1930) *Visitors' Handbook*. Hampton, VA: Hampton Institute, 24. Students were made to go to chapel and participate in Christian rites every Sunday evening. According to the women's schedule females were to go every evening. Tying administrative announcements and moral character to religious activities does not differ much from Slave owners using church to reinforce ideas of docility among their slaves.

Collegiate Newspaper Contest.<sup>19</sup> However, what is compelling about the Hampton Script from the years 1930-1940 is the increase in student protest to the institutionally advanced norm through the press. Whereas in the late 1920's any student editorials that dared question the institution's norm did anonymously and without direct injury to any particular member of faculty or administration, Hampton's collegiate shift of the 1930's brought in a different Hamptonian and all together bold journalist. This new type of Hampton journalist undoubtedly prompted Dr. Howe's following comments to the editor.

It was notable at the recent opening of the European War that the first invasion of Germany by an enemy air force was carried out with the sole purpose, not of dropping bombs, but rather to distribute millions of leaflets of printed matter. Even in modern mechanized warfare the pen bids fair to hold its place as being mightier than the sword. Therein still lies the power to create or destroy, to uphold the common weal or to work havoc....but all of us because your paper bears the name Hampton, will be interested in your columns and the influence they exert. May all records of the campus be worth recording and may the recording of the same be worthy of the records.<sup>20</sup>

By the last year of that decade, and Dr. Arthur Howe's tenure, students were boldly aligning their administration to the faulty Russian regime of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; with their names signed

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<sup>19</sup> Howe, Art. (1939, October 07). Dere Editor. *The Hampton Script*, 12(1), 2. Dr. Howe congratulated the staff on their first prize status. This reinforces the importance of studying the Hampton student and publications to get a sense of HBCU aims and norms. Hampton was not only the model in curricula and programming but student print.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.101

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **RESPONDING TO THE NORM: THE HAMPTON SCRIPT**

The Hampton Script ran numerous editorials criticizing the mandates of the student handbook. Student journalists rejected the norm through thought provoking questions to the student body and administration; questioning the true and original motives of the mandates. From some of the student responses it is clear that they understood they were asked to choose a work-based dignity over the protest of civil and just human rights. The directives attacked most by the students in the Script were the church attendance mandates, sexist rules, and fraternization bans. The very act of publicly speaking against these bans through student press rejects the institutionally advanced norm

#### **Responding to Christian Duty**

Students at Hampton were required to attend weekly (at times daily for women). Some students saw this as an attempt to control their thoughts and human desires. In the October 7, 1939 issue of the script a student observed the practice of using churches to control populations. He attacked Hampton's administration's motives.

I was reading a little Russian history the other day just brushing up you know. As my reading progressed, I came to a short summary of the effect the Russian church had on the peasants of that country. It seems that through the medium of religion the Russian was controlled and kept in "his place." The prospect of heaven was more important according to the aristocrats of that country than was enough bread....Is there any attempt being made in our midst to use the tactics of the Russian Church? Do we have in our midst at Rasputin?<sup>1</sup>

Comparing a member of Dr. Howe's administration to Rasputin is a sharp analogy. Rasputin is seen by many as a fanatical Christian that had great influence over the royal family of Russia-causing a loss of integrity for the dynasty. Was this student noting that the forced Christianity and religious services were weakening the integrity of Hampton's administration with its students? His observation also lends itself to the idea that there was a man of influence in Howe's cabinet that was pushing these mandates. However, Howe was a deeply religious man and Presbyterian minister –it would not be farfetched to assume that the mandate came from his own mind. However the poignant fact of this student observation is his knowledge of being controlled by the administration, and being kept in his place. A place where the students' mindset was not focused on the grave injustices enacted upon them; instead they were living for an inferior dignity that America would offer to a well-behaved Negro.

### **Responding to the Scottsboro Trials**

On the subject of the Scottsboro trials the student newspapers of Hampton Institute from 1930-1940 appear to be void of active protest before

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas, Hale. (1939, October 7). Observations. *The Hampton Script*, 12(1), 2.

Hughes visit in 1934, but full of fact reporting and exclusive calls to arm. For the years 1931-1937 there were approximately ten articles mentioning the Scottsboro trials. There was no comprehensive or constant coverage. It was varied, and devoid of passionate protest. One written in the May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1932 issue<sup>2</sup> was approximately 50 words and gave a brief update of one of the trial verdicts. The other article printed in the October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1934<sup>3</sup> issue of the Script gave another an update on the third and final trial. Both of these articles were respectively on the third and fourth pages of the newspaper. One of the two opinion article addressing the injustices happening in Alabama, called for an elitist call to arms.<sup>4</sup> The author stated that students joined in a meeting to review the case-and the most they came up with was signing a letter of commendation for the lawyers that were defending the Scottsboro boys. But even the author recognized that was hardly a real support or protest. He stated, "All of this good and proper but the only definite thing done was that of showing interest. As Negro students I feel that we should do more than merely show interest."<sup>5</sup> In

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<sup>2</sup> Anonymous. (1932, May 27). Scottsboro Boys Get new trial. *The Hampton Script*, 4(2), 4. Article gives very light coverage of Scottsboro trial.

<sup>3</sup> Anonymous. (1934, October 16). Scottsboro Boys Sentenced. *The Hampton Script*, 5 (3), 4. Article gives very light coverage of Scottsboro trial.

<sup>4</sup> McLaurin, William. (1933, April 22). Letters to the Editor: A Call for Action. *The Hampton Script*, 5 (14), 2. The author's answer to the Scottsboro problem was to join the 25,000 Negro college students into a national Negro student organization that could petition the N.A.A.C.P., the Civil Liberties Union, the Interracial Commission or other groups to carry on this fight and support them as we are able financially.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 106.

another opinion piece<sup>6</sup> a student writes about the perils of American prejudice and its effect on the defunct justice system. He sates” It is difficult to understand how a man ( Judge W. W. Callahan) who calls himself representing real justice can allow his prejudice to overcome him as it is doing in this famous case.”<sup>7</sup> However, he signs only with his initials and speaks nothing of what the Hampton student should do about protesting the injustice.

This was the state of Hampton’s protest even though, as stated earlier the Scottsboro trials caused protest in major cities and within major institutions across the country. The articles become gradually more opinionate and fiery after Hughes 1934 visit, and the death of two of “their own.”<sup>8</sup> Hughes stated that he was perplexed by the apathy of the students. One reason of the apathy is that it was taught. One perceived reason for the apathy is even more obvious; Hampton was a White male dominated Black College Campus. However Hughes words give us another clue to maybe why.

### **Talented Tenth Rejecting the Call**

It was cited earlier in Hughes analysis that the students only seemed interested in protesting the deaths of “one of their own,” an assertion pertaining to the tragic events surrounding Hughes fateful visit. This concurs with what is

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<sup>6</sup> L.I.B. (1933, December 6) The Scottsboro Case and Alabama Justice. *The Hampton Script*, 6(5) 3.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 108.

<sup>8</sup> See the section *Hampton’s Norm: Dignity over Protest*, p. 24.

found in the student newspapers during that time period, and more specifically those two issues of the paper. The front page features were articles about winning football games,<sup>9</sup> Upcoming social events, and two articles celebrating the achievements of their past graduates. The opinion column was full of self-serving ideas such as the ability of women to wear make-up on campus, and whether or not people eat their meals with proper etiquette.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, the Scottsboro Trials was not the only Negro cause where the Hampton student body fell short with protest rites. Hughes feared dignity that lacked protest was a common characteristic of all Negro College students at the time.

This type of self-absorption, as seen by some, was particularly what W.E.B. Dubois was scared of. This was not what he had in mind for the talented tenth. Black higher education according to W.E.B. Dubois would ensure a remnant of leaders that would stabilize the race. In his essay “The Talented Tenth”, Dubois writes that only a tenth of the race would be able to lead the rest of the race away from their social status as slaves in America. Dubois believed that this tenth would come about largely through higher education

All men cannot go to college but some men must; every isolated group or nation must have its yeast, must have for the talented few centers of training where men are not so mystified and befuddled

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<sup>9</sup> Anonymous. (1932, May 27). Gid's Ironmen wallop Plucky Tigers 40-0 In Stiff Punting Duel [Front Page Feature]. *The Hampton Script*, 4(2), 1. Article gives very thorough description of Hampton's defeat of St. Paul's football team.

<sup>10</sup> Anonymous. (1934, October 16). How We Eat [Student Opinion]. *The Hampton Script*, 5 (3), 2. Article comes from a student disgusted with the way their fellow students eat their food with no regard to etiquette, as if they're not “College trained Negroes”.

by the hard and necessary toil of earning a living, as to have no aims higher than their bellies, and no God greater than Gold. This is true training, and thus in the beginning were the favored sons of the freedom trained. Out of the colleges of the North came, after the blood of war, Ware, Cravath, Chase, Andrews, Bumstead and Spence to build the foundations of knowledge and civilization in the black South.<sup>11</sup>

Dubois statement begins to class-off his race through education. The college Negro was creating a “talented tenth.”<sup>12</sup> At a time when the majority of Blacks, especially in the south, were just trying to stay alive; Dubois called for a higher plane of existence through education. Dubois essay creates divide between the Blacks that can afford to care about how wonderful it is that their literary society meets twice a month instead of once, and Blacks outside of a college’s gates that avoid a lynch mob and false accusations of rape simply because of their racial and socioeconomic status. The former was a class that was striving to be wholly removed from the slave stigmatism of poverty and oppression; while the latter was striving to survive. What the Hamptonian’s<sup>13</sup> failed to do was fulfill Dubois prophecy. He did not just want there to be an acknowledged divide-he wanted that divide to spark protest to a dignity of class preservation and moral rightness. Dubois charged the “talented tenth” with a

<sup>11</sup> DuBois, W.E.B. (1903). "The Talented Tenth." Pp. 31-75 in *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of To-Day*. Contributions by Booker T. Washington, Principal of Tuskegee Institute, W. E. Burghardt DuBois, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Charles W. Chesnutt, and others. (NY: James Pott & Co., 1903).

<sup>12</sup> The talented tenth is a description of educated Negroes credited to W. E. b. Dubois after his 1903 speech of the same name. The term is at times still used today to describe the black elite. Often used negatively, as a accusation of snobbery or “selling-out”, the original meeting carried a social responsibility for those fortunate enough to class off from the rest of the race.

<sup>13</sup> Nickname for Hampton students.



major responsibility to raise the other ninety percent of their race to a level of distinction.

The “talented tenth” were to be protectors of the race. Dubois believed that the educated of the race should lead the race in upward social mobility and due political standing. During slavery and directly afterwards Dubois asserts that it was the church that led the race and its preachers. At the turn of the century Dubois called for the college-bred Negro. What he saw in 1930 and what is witnessed in the student newspapers in 1930 was a norm of dignity in materialism and what the toil of their hands could get them. At Howard University’s 1930 commencement Dubois stated the following:

Our college man today is, on the average, a man untouched by real culture. He deliberately surrenders to selfish and even silly ideals, swarming into Fall 1984 413 semiprofessional athletics and Greek letter societies, and affecting to despise scholarship and the hard grind of study and research. The greatest meetings of the Negro college year like those of the white college year have become vulgar exhibitions of liquor, extravagance, and fur coats. We have in our colleges a growing mass of stupidity and indifference.<sup>14</sup>

With Dubois words being a picture of the state of the Negro college student it is

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<sup>14</sup> W. E. B. Dubois 1930 chastising commencement address to Howard University graduates. Dubois also stated in this speech that this indifference came from college-bred Negro’s blind acceptance of the norms advanced at White universities. He states that they as Negroes cannot afford the leisurely thoughts or lack thereof that their white brothers, who presently ran the country, shared. He stated “The average Negro undergraduate has swallowed hook, line, and sinker, the dead bait of the white undergraduate, who, born in an industrial machine does not have to think, and does not think.” W.E.B. Du Bois, “Education and Work (1930),” in *The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques, 1906-1960*, edited by Herbert Aptheker, (New York, 1973), p. 67. In *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* by Clayborne Carson; *Black Students in Higher Education: Conditions and Experiences in the 1970s* by Gail E. Thomas Review by: V. P. Franklin *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Autumn, 1984), p. 411-418.

of no surprise that the *Hampton Script* spent a disproportionate amount of its ink on things of self-consequence.

#### In Name Only: The Student Self-Government League

A more obvious reason for the lack of Scottsboro coverage in the *Hampton Script* is administrative censorship and no real outlet for students to self-govern their ideas and voice. Like most centers of higher education, Hampton required all student organizations to have a member of the faculty as an advisor. The *Hampton Script* was no different. Student journalist's hands were invariably tied by the administration, and their print reflections of what the administration allowed. If it is assumed that the reasoning and words used by the dean of men that Hughes recounts in his commentary<sup>15</sup> are indicative of what type of attitude the Hampton Administration held towards social or protest; then it is clear why *The Hampton Script* is missing all conversation around the topic of the Scottsboro trials. Student autonomy from the administration at Hampton was essentially non-existent at Hampton. In a March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1930<sup>16</sup> article as student complains about the vice grip the administration has on student creative endeavors, in this case particularly the drama team. Of course this student's complaint was submitted to the paper anonymously but he emphatically states

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Anonymous. (1930, March 22). A Plea for Freedom of the Boards. [Student Opinion]. *The Hampton Script*, 2(8), 2. Article comes from an anonymous student that is against the censorship of the Drama club. The student simply wishes that the faculty advisor be artistically sympathetic, progressive, and an authority on the subject matter. Not just a faculty member doing administrative bidding.

the following.

Although the Hampton Players have taken a decided step forward in the dramatic world by helping to organize an intercollegiate dramatic association we feel that their labor will be in vain unless the school authorities view censorship from a different angle...I know that the Hampton Players recently submitted the following plays to the committee members for their approval, and only one was approved...All except the last were wither "too suggestive," or dealt with "problems above the students', or were not "worth wasting time over."<sup>17</sup>

This type of censorship can be assumed to extend to the *Hampton Script*. The idea that a subject dealt with "problems above the students" can be interpreted as issues of a social and/or political nature-such as the Scottsboro Trials. This student's record of the advisor's reasons for censorship concurs with Dean Major Brown's-That was not Hampton's way. Another article of the same issue<sup>18</sup> calls for the resignation of the President of the student's self government league because of his ineffectiveness in promoting student thought and sticking with what the administration wants to advance.

The Students' Self-Government League according to students<sup>19</sup> was put in place to address the needs and voice of the student body. However, according

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 98

<sup>18</sup> Hunter, Oscar H. (1930, March 22). To Whom It May Concern [Student Opinion]. *The Hampton Script*, 2(8), 2. Article comes from the point of a resigned Student's Self-Government League's resigned president. He complains about the three students that asked him to resign not understanding the actual workings and limitations of the council.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 99

to the description within a 1926 copy of Hampton Institute's Visitor Handbook<sup>20</sup> it can be concluded that the league was simply another vehicle to advance the administration's norms.

The Student's Self-Government League, having as its purpose the promotion of unity and loyalty in the school, was formed in December 1923. Its membership includes all the students at the Institute, who elect to represent them a Student Council consisting of 26 members, which meets regularly with not more than seven or less than three faculty members. These are at present the Principal, the Dean of Women and her assistant. The Chaplain, and the commandant and his assistant.<sup>21</sup>

With so many members of the administration tied directly into the causes that the student body's council will champion or defend there is no shock at the frustration and resignation of its 1930 student president, and the lack of coverage of the controversial Scottsboro trial in the student's main publication.

### **Responding to Dr. Howe**

As stated earlier in this research Dr. Howe's tenure at Hampton was not a pleasant time between the students and administration. The Afro-American stated, "Since collegiate instruction was instituted and a more mature student began to attend Hampton, the president's seat has been far from a comfortable

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<sup>20</sup> Hampton Institute. (1930) *Visitors' Handbook*. Hampton, VA: Hampton Institute The visitor handbook gives thorough information to visitors of the school's campus about the school's financials, programming, and campus regulations.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 101 In 1926 Hampton was still named Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute and titled the head of their administration; principal. In 1930, with its change to Hampton Institute only, the administrative lead was deemed a President.

one.”<sup>22</sup> However the Hampton Script is devoid of any mention to the lengths of student protest.

According to *The Afro American* the increasing tide of student resentment brought two strikes and “unceasing dissatisfaction at the segregation practices enforced on the Hampton campus.”<sup>23</sup> However no fact-bearing articles in the script mention the strikes or the disgust with segregation on campus. There are editorials from students both anonymous and known such as one student’s complaint about the administration’s taxing rules,<sup>24</sup> another about the strained student-administration relations, and another about the need for a real student council that saw after the needs of the student population.<sup>25</sup> But the script reported nothing directly about student strikes or protests.

Nevertheless, the student editorials give a good view into the climate on Hampton’s campus during Dr. Howe’s last year as president. The editorials got bolder and students even signed their names. One student, Hale Thompson, ranted about the administration’s lack of movement concerning the segregated campus hospital. In 1939 the student infirmary was closed due to retrenchment and all students were to be treated at Dixie Hospital.<sup>26</sup> Howe stated this was for

<sup>22</sup> Anonymous. ( 1940, March 2) Hampton Seeks a New President, An Editorial. *The Afro American*. 148(29)1.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 124

<sup>24</sup> Orme, Genevieve. (1940, April, 6) Campus Social Life. *The Hampton Script*. 12(10) 2.

<sup>25</sup> Q. (1932, January, 16). No Title-Opinion Piece. *The Hampton Script*. 4(7) 2.

<sup>26</sup> Students’ tuition indirectly paid for services at Dixie Hospital and some services required direct payment. Some students disagreed with paying into a segregated system.

the saving of Hampton's nursing program and a way to ensure that Hampton nursing graduates would have somewhere to work. However Mr. Thompson protested loudly with his words.

It has been said that the new arrangement has been made in an attempt to save the nursing school and to keep Dixie Hospital open to the colored people of the community. Further as long as Hampton has its finger in the Dixie pie, Negro nurses will have the opportunity to work at the Dixie Hospital. Of course they will, as is customary, have the extreme pleasure of working at the segregated hospital for less pay than that received by white nurses and with no hope of advancement. It seems to me that if Hampton's administration is sincere in its oft quoted desire to rid the world of racial intolerance, it would not countenance the present set-up at Dixie Hospital. Why should Hampton money be poured into an institution which practices such an undemocratic thing as segregation? I can't answer the question. Ask the Administration!<sup>27</sup>

According to the script the students did ask the administration and the answer they received was not favorable. A student coalition of four polar student leaders came together to address Dr. Howe on the issue as well as many others. However, according to the article the segregation of Dixie Hospital was the one issue the coalition left with no resolve from President Howe.

The next problem to be discussed, generally, was the Dixie Hospital arrangement. Several questions were asked and answered in this discussion, but the matter was left vague, dependent upon a conference with Doctor Howe, school physician, who knows the details of the situation.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Thomas, Hale. (1939, October 7). Observations. The Hampton Script, 12(1), 2.

<sup>28</sup> Anonymous. (1939, October 7). Coalition Brings end to Bitter Student Warfare. The Hampton Script, 12(1), 1.

President Howe resigned in 1940 to the surprise of his student body, faculty, and staff<sup>29</sup>. The end of his tenure was more bitter than sweet for students, mainly because of a still segregated hospital standing upon Hampton's sacred grounds.

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<sup>29</sup> Anonymous. (1940, March 9). Resignation a Surprise. *The Hampton Script*, 12(9), 1&6.

## **CONCLUSION**

In future research the comparison of how well the aims at the HBCU incubation compare to the cultural aims of the present HBCU should be studied. Also, the impact of Hampton's early mis-education of the Negro student upon current HBCU institution norms and the consequences of those norms on Black culture should also be addressed. There is a great need for the BCU's purpose to be continually kept in focus.

The Hampton student shifted from what Langston Hughes boldly called a coward at the start of the 1930's to a force that defied Hampton's institutional norms by 1940. Some may attribute the shift to the different type of student Hampton was attracting with its new collegiate curriculum while others may attribute it to simply a sign of the times. The local Negro paper<sup>1</sup> presented the fact eloquently, "Apparently the day of the docile and humble student body which accepted, without criticism or protest, every dictum of a reactionary regime has passed.<sup>2</sup>" The beginnings of social unrest were rumbling in Black communities all across the nation by the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, and by 1940 Hampton contributed to the noise.

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<sup>1</sup> Anonymous. ( 1940, March 2) Hampton Seeks a New President, An Editorial. The Afro American. 48(29)1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 132



Through this research it is clear that the Hampton student used the little control they had over their press to gradually over the years resist a norm that called for a an imagined dignity that would not allow them to protest the injustices against their innatedignity. Hampton Students by 1940 did indeed begin to resist the institutionally advanced norms. They were ineffective at the start of the century resisting the Scottsboro Case and the deaths of two of their beloved alumni, however they succeeded in resistance by becoming a great factor in a the resignation of their segregation abiding President Arthur Howe. With its growth and consequential protest programming and print, Hampton, finally served as a worthy model for other HBCU's to mark.

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## **VITA**

Akela Stanfield was born and raised in Hampton, Virginia. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, she attended Spelman College, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in English, in 2004.

Currently, Akela is a Curriculum and Policy Specialist for Chicago Public Schools in Chicago, Illinois. She lives in Chicago, Illinois.